ABILENE REFLECTOR

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STROTHER BROS.

AN ELOPEMENT SPOILED.

The coachman stood in the wide hall door,
And white as snow were the gloves he wore,
And the golden band 'round his tall silk hat
Shed a ray of light on the hall door mat.

The heiress stood in the darkened hall,
Securely wrapped in her hood and shawl—
'Twas a tale of love that has oft been told—
'Twas the hour of her flight with the coachman bold.

The banker waited without the gate,
As silent and grim as avenging fate,
And deep and low was the oath he swore,
And heavy and thick the club he bore.

The lovers come—the gate swings back—
The club descends—oh, what a whack!
The coachman lies on the ground to rest,
Nor seeks for a spot that would suit him best.

There's a vacancy for a coachman now,
And the stern old man has made a vow
That the next he hires, whether black or white,
Will be chained to the stable door at night.

—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

THE RED TASSEL.

"It is the Spirit, After All, That Makes the Man."

As I sat before my open grate to-night, taking a tired man's ease in dressing-gown and slippers, my thoughts wandered idly back over the events of the day and settled, singularly enough, upon on elegant red tassel that I had observed, with a physician's abstracted glance, depending from a window-curtain in Madame Maystone's chamber. Madame Maystone being the wealthiest and healthiest patient on my list, it is not strange that, during the detailed and monotonous recitals of her physical phenomena, the choice furnishings of her sick-room should sometimes thrust themselves upon my notice, for I was reared, not in luxury, but in homely comfort, upon a remote and jagged strip of the New England coast. Yet as I sat and mused this evening, drowsy with the genial heat of my dancing wood-fire, the vision of that swinging red tassel passed constantly before my eyes, not as a type of riches and an easeful life, but as a reminder of that talisman which unlocked for me the door of my profession and of that one and only guerdon bestowed by my gentle lady upon her ungraced knight. It is too late for work, too early for sleep, and so, while the golden flame flickers cruelly and beautifully, like a dream of love, about the dumb heart of the log, I, the scribe of memory, will take my pen and write.

About forty years ago, as the unflattering calendar has it, I awoke one morning with a sudden, vivid consciousness of impending destiny under the weather-stained roof, which is still pointed out in Skipperville as the "old Rainford place," and clambered with double my usual speed out of the billowy recesses of the feather bed, although in truth, what with the pain and nervous frights at night, it was never my wont to be a sleepy-head. For you may have seen already, if you have the bad manners to peep in at an old doctor's office window, that I am of small figure and misshapen—an unpicturesque circumstance that has long ceased to trouble the patients who need my skill and pay my charges, but has never entirely ceased to trouble me. Yet I am twice the man, let me tell you, in corporeal inches as well as mental, that I was ever expected to be. You would have thought me a pitiful youngster indeed, if you could have seen me on that gray March morning sacred to recollection, limping down the old-fashioned staircase, thin and white and twisted to one side by unseemly deformity, my wretched bit of a body topped by a great, square head, with brown eyes peering mournfully out from under a thicket of tangled hair. You would have stopped to speak to me tenderly, as to a child, maybe, and would have answered with incredulous gaze my shrill retort that I was eighteen years old last Christmas day and wanted no man's pity.

But if you had once heard my mother, with tears and sobbings and hidings of the face in her matronly white apron, tell the story of her only son—how she had dropped him, a hearty baby of twenty months, from her fainting arms upon the stones of the wharf, when she had hastened there with her neighbors to see my father's ship come in and the bronzed, rough-bearded sailors, turning from the embraces of their wives and sweethearts, had told her with stammering speech that she alone should see her husband never more until the sea gave up its dead, you would not have forgotten speedily in what wise it came to pass that the last of the Rainfords was a weakling and a cripple. If I myself had been able to refrain from brooding over that bitter truth, there was one member of our little household who would not have suffered me to forget it for a day. My grandfather, known to all Skipperville as Old Cap'n Reuben, was the scourge of my childhood, being stern of tongue and mighty of bulk and gifted with a contempt as huge as his body for every son of the Rainfords who was found on his twenty-first birthday to stand below the haughty Rainford measure of six feet one. I may as well acknowledge here that in our village home we were a family of no trifling consequence and, that marvelous stories of the deeds of my broad-shouldered and sea-faring ancestors were told on winter evenings by aged fireside gossips, who did not fail to complete their narration with a melancholy shake of the head and words too much like these:

"Ay, ay; it was a fine old stock. We shall not see its like in Skipperville agin. But it is nigh run out a'ready, for Old Cap'n Reuben is hard upon his eighties, an' there's nary Rainford left beside him, save for the Widder's crooked boy, who'll not be like to tread the deck o' a three-master, as long as there's churchyard grass to cover him."

But stung and pricked though I often was by such chance shafts as these, it was the sword-edge of my grandfather's contempt that cut me to the heart. That majestic figure which had not learned to stoop in all its eighty years, that massive head crowned with snow-white hair, that rugged face bearing still the marks of sea and storm, that imperious right hand stained—as the whisper ran—with the mutinous blood of a sailor, that heavy foot so agile once and fearless in icy riggings, that deep, gruff voice with never in all its cadence a kindly tone for me, overshadowed all my sickly boyhood and hedged it in with a helpless sense of shame and misery.

My case was indeed a hard one. The Rainford spirit burned in my fragile frame, but only to consume, not to illu- [illegible] ly as the approval of my grandfather, but what heroic deed had the straight-limbed left on earth for cripples to perform? Meanwhile, my weakness and puny stature rendering me of little use to any one, I was allowed to attend the village school as much as health permitted and inclination suggested. But although I was an incessant reader of such odd volumes as our library afforded and would be curled up with my book for hours at a time in the sunniest corner of the south porch, where my grandfather, heeding me no more than the dog at his feet, sat upright in his high-backed chair, his two powerful hands clasped over the head of his stick and his wistful eyes turned seaward, yet my attendance at the little school house on the hill was decidedly desultory. This arose partly from my aversion to the society of other lads of my own age, so much larger and more vigorous than myself, and partly from the unsatisfactory character of the instruction dispensed by flaxen-headed young fellows from a neighboring academy, who dogged only as much arithmetic and geography into the small boys on the front benches as was compatible with their keener sense of duty toward the large girls on the back settee.

But this winter a lady had taken her place behind the ink-stained desk—a girl of some twenty summers, dark-haired and graceful, and my devotion to school had received an unprecedented impetus. As I put the matter to myself, with the delighted sense of the final, the predetermined, the inevitable, I had found my destiny. I had met my counterpart. I had fallen in love. I was a worm beside her. Be it granted. If the sun shines on a worm, is he not warmed? The blood of a dauntless race was flowing through my veins. With that pale face as a guiding star, the path to fortune might open even yet.

In point of fact, in me the Rainford energy, my legs being disabled, had gone to the brain, and many a romance had I spun in consequence through the long and idle hours of my childhood. My deformity and my feebleness were so repulsive to the sturdy instinct within me that I lived in an ideal world apart from these. In my daily lot my weakness, scorn and bitterness. These were too airy materials for freakish fancy to build with, and thus, although left to find her own straw, she had wrought so gaily and so well that I had grown quite wonted to the image of myself as a gallant young mariner, the crown of all the Rainfords, who by one swift turn of the fateful wheel had won inches and graces, wealth and fame, a lovely bride and a grandfather's blessing and who should bear himself, in his old age, with the most exemplary consideration toward all less fortunate scions of his blood.

So there sat fancy, like a roguish spider, spinning cobwebs in the crippled boy's young brain, just as she has sometimes spun them since even within the gray pate of a respectable old doctor of my acquaintance, and weaving with every one the vision of a sweet, grave face. And so, when in the course of that nomadic existence known as boarding round, highly cherished by the educational fathers as a device at once social and economical, Miss Celia Lincoln knocked at my grandfather's door, I acted scarcely a more extravagant part than many taller youths of eighteen summertides, in slipping my first poem, a fervid if occasionally unmetrical declaration of my sentiments, under the bead-embroidered pin-cushion that my careful mother had drawn from the camphor-chest and placed upon our visitor's bureau. It was the remembrance of this decisive act which made my thin hand shake upon the rattling latch as I opened the kitchen door next morning, but once within the influence of that cheery spot, the one room in the house where my mother reigned supreme, I dropped upon a cricket and gave myself up to the expectation of breakfasting with the teacher.

It must be confessed, to begin with, that the Widow Rainford, to make use of village phrase, was preparing a breakfast much more elaborate than usual. The little, white-spread table, carven in strange fashion from sweet-smelling woods that never grew on honest Yankee soil, stood snugly on its twisted legs before the dumpy cooking-stove, much at a loss to understand why it should be thus called upon to support a platter of bony herrings and a dish of chubby doughnuts, in addition to its customary morning burden of buckwheat cakes and coffee. The pictured jug, also, too ugly for ugliness and so perforce called beautiful, brought from Japan as it was by the youngest Captain Rainford, on his last home-returning voyage, was equally put about in mind to understand for what reason it had been so abruptly emptied of the reluctant molasses and filled to the brim, instead with golden maple syrup.

But whatever perplexity may have beset such stray articles of foreign furniture and crockery, the bright little kitchen, in general, seemed well content with these indications of festivity. The kettle sang a jovial song. The flat-irons, standing in an even row on the mantel shelf, with their black noses turned up disdainfully toward the ceiling, nevertheless elbowed one another in secret excitement. The portrait of George Washington above the clock, albeit somewhat dimmed by the smoke of many a broiling, smiled through its stains benignantly. Yellow Tabby, sniffing the delicious odors that hung upon the air, wrapped her ecstatic tail more tightly about her paws and shut her blinking eyes against temptation. But the most comfortable sight of all was the face of my comely mother herself, as she finally raised her flushed cheeks from the fire and said, in a voice musical with motherly tenderness and household cheer:

"Now, Ralph, run and call your teacher to her breakfast."

Dear mother! she would always forget my years and treat me like a baby; but I obeyed her command, blushing to the roots of my brown hair as I opened the parlor door. But Miss Lincoln turned her quiet eyes upon me and nodded without change of color, promptly closing the door of one of the quaint cabinets that lined the walls, where she had been serenely tingering all manner of time-worn curiosities, brought by four generations of Rainfords from over the sea.

My mother greeted Miss Lincoln with her usual simple cordiality, as graceful as a wayside fountain to thirsty lips, and asked if she had passed a restful night.

"Yes, I thank you," replied the school teacher, with a certain precision of articulation suggestive of the spelling book, "I slept extremely well."

I blushed again for indignation. What right had she to these sound slumbers at such a crisis of my life, if not of hers? I myself had presumed that I should toss on a sleepless pillow all night long and remembered a little sheepishly that I had kissed Nod's scepter before the village clock struck twelve. But who ever heard of a lady sleeping [illegible] well" after the reading of a missive which had been warmed against a lover's heart? There was only one explanation possible. She had not yet caught sight of my note. I wished I had had the courage to pin it upon the top of the cushion instead of concealing it beneath. But as we stood behind our chairs waiting, according to the family custom, for the entrance of my grandfather, Miss Lincoln turned to me with her little, professional air of staid dignity and said, as she drew out my identical poem from her pocket:

"You were early in passing in your composition, Ralph. I said they need not be ready before Friday afternoon. I have corrected this, however, although as I had not my blue pencil with me, you must notice that I have drawn a red line under both the misspelled words and the errors in grammatical construction. I have made a cross against several false rhymes and the most seriously defective rhythms. It is a pretty effort, I think, and you have improved greatly in punctuation."

My disgust and chagrin admitted of no words. The only love-letter I ever wrote or ever shall, I crushed hurriedly into my pocket, and was grateful that the arrival of my grandfather diverted attention from my crimson cheeks.

He entered with his most stately air, and I readily perceived that his delay was due to extra attention bestowed upon his toilet. He had the natural gallantry of a seaman and astonished Miss Lincoln by kissing her pale brow deliberately, with the words:

"Dear madame, allow me to salute you." He performed the same ceremony in connection with my mother, who submitted gracefully, as she had done for nearly twenty years, never daring to cross her husband's father, of whom she stood in an awe even deeper than my own. The quaint courtesy of his manner, too, recommended his greetings. Of me he took, as usual, not the slightest notice.

My grandfather having politely seated his guest, proceeded to draw out his own ponderous arm-chair, a signal at which my mother and I ventured to take our places, and while old Cap'n Reuben was addressing Miss Lincoln in his deep tones, my mother poured the coffee and served us all in turn, expressing her secret tenderness for me and her uneasy consciousness of some trouble in my face, by heaping a very pyramid of the brownest buckwheat cakes upon my plate.

"You are, my dear young madam," my grandfather was saying, "engaged, I believe, in the occupation of teaching."

Having heard that old Cap'n Reuben was exceedingly deaf, Miss Lincoln bowed silently in answer.

"An honorable occupation," continued my grandfather; "pray tell me how many pupils have the happiness of being under your instruction at present."

"About thirty," replied the teacher, raising her silvery voice.

But the old man shook his head mournfully.

"I do not hear you, madam. I have listened too long to the roar of stormy seas. The crash of winds and waves fills my ears continually and renders it hard for any human voice to reach me. I have sailed the seas, dear madam, for over half a century, and I should have found a grave long since beneath their tides. There my father sleeps and his brave father before him,—both stalwart men in their time and the doers of many a worthy deed. And my son, who ranked with the best of his race, who sailed from this port, on his twenty-first birthday, Captain of as fine a whaler as ever rode the waves—my son is gone before. It is not often that you see, perhaps, a family on New England soil so proud of pedigree. But my ancestors were bold and hardy sailors whose names will not lightly perish. Ah, madame, it is a thousand pities that the blood of the Rainfords flows no more, for I am old man now and mine is already turning to ice within my veins."

Amidst all my fuming rage and mortification, I could see, with a certain habitual pride in my grandfather, that Miss Lincoln, now meeting him for the first time, was strongly impressed by his words and manner. The ancient French descent of our family was apparent in his courtly bearing, made more emphatic by the lordly air that years of sovereignty on board his ship had given him.

But as he sadly shook his snowy head, lamenting for his sea-faring race soon to become extinct, my teacher, forgetting his infirmity, hastened to say, nodding and smiling toward me: "But here is Ralph, Captain Rainford, a good boy and as bright as need be at his lessons, whenever he chooses to study."

"He will always persist in seeing me against the background of a blackboard and a map," I groaned inwardly, while my poor mother, who so seldom heard a syllable in my praise, grew radiant with pleasure and deluged my cakes with a fresh supply of syrup.

My grandfather had not heard the teacher's words, but he followed her glance and said, bending his shaggy brows upon me with a frown:

"Nay, madame, the Rainford men have passed away. The lad features my son, but only as a shadow in the glass. Manhood is declared in action, and this mopish girl in pantaloons—dear madame, pray excuse the term—is but the hollow echo of voices heard no more. His arms are pipe stems and his hands are claws. He has never done a deed, nor can, nor will. He bears the Rainford eyes and hair, and dwells beneath the Rainford roof, but as uselessly as a picture on the wall. The men of my name, dear madame, sleep in ocean graves, all save myself, whom death has, maybe, forgotten, for never yet has the spoiler sought a Rainford on land. Ah! if my son had left a son, and not a doll, behind him, I would yet sail the seas once more and be buried where my father sleeps, in the far Arctic Ocean, with an iceberg for my only monument."

The melancholy majesty of the old man's manner had brought the tears to his listener's gray eyes. He noticed them, well pleased, and when, on rising from the breakfast table, she equipped herself for school, wrapping about her shoulders a warm, red cloak, with hood and hanging tassel, not the timid remonstrances of my mother nor the chill of the wintry morning could restrain the gallant old gentleman from offering the teacher his arm to the school-house.

We were doubtless a comical little company as we made our way across the frozen fields, treading cautiously on the ice-crusted drifts of snow and following, where we could, the direction of the spell-bound river, that glittered, white and voiceless, at the bottom of the long embankment, near whose edge we stepped. My grandfather insisted on yielding up the narrow footpath, trodden by the school-boys, to his demure companion, and struggled on by her side as best he could, feeling his way with a mighty cane whose knot was wrought of whale's tooth and whose weight was more than I often cared to lift. A blue comforter, the ends streaming in the wind, was tied about his ears. Miss Lincoln walked quietly beside him in her red cloak, resting her little hand lightly on his great coat-sleeve and giving ear to the old sailor's profuse and stately compliments with as composed a countenance as if he were reciting the multiplication table. I limped at a good distance behind, my books under my arm and my cap drawn closery down over my sulky face.

Just as I was watching the red tassel and one end of the blue comforter, having been blown together by a gust of sleety wind, dancing and flirting in the most indecorous manner behind their wearers' backs, there rose a shout behind us.

"The bull! Look out! The bull!" I knew the meaning of that cry too well. I knew what a ferocious animal it was that Farmer Ingram kept stalled up in a corner of the lot through which we were passing. In summer we school children always shunned this pasture, but through the winter the bull was kept in confinement and I had entertained no thought of peril. How well I remember that instant! There was no time for dreaming then. The spark of manhood in my blood burst into flame I looked upon life and death, and honor outshone them both. I felt a strange exultation and complete self-possession. The furious beast, its tail erect and head bent low, maddened by the sight of the red cloak, was rushing full upon Miss Lincoln, who had but just caught sight of it and stood pale as a ghost, helpless from utter terror. Throwing down my books, I hurried toward her as fast as my hobbling limbs would carry me. I could not play even the hero gracefully, you see. My grandfather turned his head at the same time and without the pause of an instant, old as he was, whirled his mighty cane above his head and dashed across the snow to meet the bull. But his foot slipped on the glassy crust and he fell heavily, the cane being thrown ineffectually from his hand, right before the feet of the red-eyed brute, who trampled him as he plunged onward, without pausing, toward the helpless girl. I remember thinking even then, in the supreme moment of perils what shameful bigotry it was in the prejudiced creature to fly into such a passion with any one for offending his fastidious taste in dress. I saw but one course of action open before me, not dignified nor glorious, but perhaps capable of saving a woman's life. A boy could not fight; a cripple could not run; but I was a light little fellow and might possibly slide safely down the bank and out upon the ice, where Mr. Bull would find it embarrassing to follow.

Quicker than the thought, I had torn the obnoxious scarlet cloak from the teacher's shoulders, and, holding it by the tassel, flourished it so offensively in the animal's eyes as he drew near that he swerved from his path, with a low snort of fury, and directed his charge at once against myself, who had leapt as far away from Miss Lincoln as I could. I scrambled back to the very edge of the embankment and even as I felt the hot breath of the beast upon my face, threw my heels over my head with a shrill, derisive hoot, and, curled into a ball, still clinging to the cloak, rolled down the steep incline and out upon the river. The exasperated bull pitched headlong after me, floundered a moment in the drifts, through whose crust he broke forthwith, and, rendered frantic by his obstinate and ugly wrath, blind to everything except that flattering red rag, rushed heavily out upon the thin sheet of ice, which crashed and gave way beneath him. In one instant more he was caught as in a trap, the greater part of his body immersed in the bitter cold water and jagged edges of ice cutting his tough hide at every struggle.

Well! That was all. There was nothing more for me to do but rub my poor lame legs and hobble up the bank again. I felt that I did not cut exactly a heroic figure, as I crept wearily across the snow, leaving Farmer Ingram and his men to extricate the bellowing bull, which was in danger of drowning itself by its impatient plunges. My only regret was that the red tassel had been wrenched from the cloak. I found Miss Lincoln, her eyes flooded with grateful tears, supporting my grandfather, who was much shaken by the excitement and the fall, and more severely hurt than any of us as yet surmised by the trampling he had undergone

As I limped up to them, hat crushed and jacket awry, brushing off the patches of snow from clothes with one hand, while in the other I still grasped the cloak and tassel, Miss Lincoln, to my consternation, threw her arms about my neck and kissed me.

"You are the dearest little boy in the world, Ralph," she cried, with no trace of the spelling-book left in her eager speech, "how can I ever thank you?"

But I think a finer thrill passed through my frame, when the white-haired sea Captain, for the first time in our two lives, gave me his honored hand and said in those deep tones, never before so gracious to my ears:

"Well done, my grandson. It was the deed of a Rainford."

My log has burned to ashes. I must light my chamber candle and go to bed. There is nothing more to tell, unless you care to hear that when I was actually confronted with the question, I found it easier to ask Miss Lincoln for the red tassel than for her hand, and my grandfather for a medical education than permission to set up house-keeping.

"Why do you choose to be a doctor, Ralph?" he queried, not unkindly.

"What better use can I make of my brains, since they are all of the Rainford in me, than by setting them to the help of other poor fellows, who may be in as hard a case as mine?" I answered in the shrill tone that penetrated his dull ears most readily.

"Ay, ay, that is true," he responded, musingly, "your eyes have a flash like your father's, Ralph. It is the spirit, after all, that makes the man."

And my poor grandfather, who never knew another well day from the hour when the bull's hoofs passed over him, expended his money upon me liberally and lived to feel his sufferings lightened by my skill. After working hard at my books this side of the water, I studied in the foreign hospitals for several years, and published a little pamphlet, upon my return, which gained me some coavenient reputation among my neighbors. I did not marry Miss Lincoln, largely for the reason that she preferred to marry some one else—a missionary with a gray beard, who took her off to Turkey, where she died ten years ago of the fever. But I find myself, with my easy, bachelor habits, pretty comfortable as the months go by. I have a little money, a little fame, a little good-will up and down the street, and a profession that gives my intellectual activities and my human sympathies equal play. I have a few treasures, too. That massive cane, with the whale tooth head, is one of them. And if I should open the secret drawer in my office desk you would find there nothing very pathetic or romantic, only a lock of my mother's white hair and a faded scarlet tassel.—*Katherine Lee Bates, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.*

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—The almost universal practice of teaching abstract numbers before concrete is an inversion of nature and common sense.—*Philadelphia Press.*

—The Oxford *Press*, it is claimed, uses paper enough each year in printing Bibles to form a band nearly nine inches wide around the earth.

—The most sublime announcement ever made to man is that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; and yet we are so familiar with it that we regard it as a commonplace.

—Four young ladies were among the recipients of scholarships at the recent contest in Cornell University. Four young men also won. Cornell believes in equal honors and privileges.—*Syracuse Journal.*

—The Duke of Norfolk has given to the Catholic Church since 1868, when he became of age, more than $2,500,000, besides very large sums to private charities which amount to nearly as much more.

—Bishop Wordsworth, of the Church of England, diocese of Scotland, has lately announced to his clergy that he despairs of a union between the Established Church of Scotland, the "Auld Kirk," and the Episcopal Church in that land.

—The eldest daughter of Dr. Thomas, of Baltimore, one of the Johns Hopkins trustees, recently graduated from Zurich University with the highest honors in philosopy earned by any student in the past two hundred years.

—During the trial of a disputed settlement at Leith, Scotland, one of the witnesses was asked: "Do sermons that are delivered and not read edify you most?" He excited the risibility of the Court by replying, "I consider that if ministers can not remember their sermons, it is perfectly unreasonable to expect their hearers to do so."

—A man visiting London went to church and seated himself without hesitation in the nearest pew. Soon the owner came in, eyed the stranger critically, and writing "My pew" on the flyleaf of a prayer-book, handed the book to the intruder. The stranger read the message, smiled a beautiful smile, and wrote underneath: "Nice pew. What do you pay for it?"

—The difference between the condition of education in the South and that in the North is vividly set forth in a few statisties which we take from the report of the Commissioner of Education. According to this document the average school year consists in North Carolina of 62.5 days, in Georgia of 65, in Tennessee of 73, in Rhode Island of 184, in New Jersey of 192, in Maryland of 199. In Alabama the annual per capita expense of each child is $1.01, in Massachusetts, $15.83.—*Chicago Journal.*

—Of the donations by women to different colleges in this country $750,000 has been given for the benefit of women, less than half of the sum given by women for man's benefit; $137,000 have been bestowed by women to co-educational institutions, not taking into account the immense sum given by Mrs. Fiske to Cornell University, which is now in litigation. There are now 13,000 women graduates from colleges who aid, in a measure, these institutions. Vassar graduates have given $25,000 in fifty years to their *alma mater*. The Harvard Annex has received a sum of $45,000. Wellesley, through Mrs. Valeria Stone, has been benefited over $100,000 worth, and Smith College, founded by a lady, Miss Sophia Smith, has had $365,000.—*Cleveland Leader.*

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

—A noiseless violin has been invented. Now when some one discovers a noiseless opera singer the weary soul of the public will find rest.—*Chicago Tribune.*

—An old negro woman, praying for a certain slanderer, said: "O, Lord, won't you be kind enough to take de door of his mouth off, and when you put it on again just hang it on the gospel hinges of peace on earth and good will to men."

—A young lady who was too sick to wash the supper dishes recovered sufficiently fifteen minutes after her mother had performed the job to play croquet and "sit up" with a young man until midnight. What delicate creatures American girls are, anyhow.—*Drake's Travelers' Magazine.*

—"You may talk as much as you please," remarked the irascible man; "but let me tell you that I consider your arguments as well as yourself beneath my notice. I don't give you so much as a thought." "I hope not," was the response; "I wouldn't have you bankrupt yourself on my account.—*Boston Transcript.*

—"Wife, I wish you could make pies that would taste as good as my mother's used to." "Well, my dear, you run out and bring in a pailful of water and a hodful of coal and an armful of wood, just as you used to for your mother, and maybe you will like my pies as well." He concluded the pies would do just as they were.—*Boston Post.*

—Say, ma, I seen a nigger put seven eggs in his mouth all at once," said Johnny Quarle as he came in from his supper. "Humph, that's nothing; your father put that butcher shop and a horse and wagon into his," tartly replied Mrs. Quarle. Whisky was the ruination of the old man.—*Brooklyn Times.*

—He was reading a patent-medicine almanac. Suddenly he jumped up and shouted to his wife: "Somebody run for the doctor: I'm sick. I'm the sickest man on the footstool. There ain't a disease known to medical science that I havent got pronounced symptoms of. I have reached the advanced stage of everything. Somebody run for the doctor quick!"—*Detroit Post.*

—"Father, please tell me what entail means and if we have such a law in the United States?" Father—Under the law of entail, my boy, the landed property of the father is handed down to the eldest son, successively, generation after generation. We have no such provision in the United States. Here the money generally goes to the lawyers who settle the father's estate. You see the difference?"—*N. Y. Sun.*

Spiral Tracery.

There is nothing more wonderful in woodwork than the spiral tracery, as certain wonderful pieces of turning made in Ohio are called. The turning is so true that the different parts of a twist or of an intricate braided pattern slip into place unerringly, and large screens and panels are made in which the wood seems as flexible and manageable as a silken cable. Arches from which curtains may be hung, screens into which mirrors or rare embroideries may be fitted, little panels for desk railings, and easels of great lightness and strength, are a few of the things for which the tracery has already been used, but its possibilities are infinite.—*Boston Advertiser.*